

From the Desk of Matt Dolan



With the introduction of the governor's executive budget for fiscal years 2018/2019, the 132nd General Assembly has truly begun.

There is a lot to like in the governor's plan. An Ohio government based on a common-sense approach to fiscal management with conservative growth estimates and restrained spending, will help ensure that Ohio remains an economically competitive state. The budget's focus on education and workforce training and development is a high priority for me and the governor. Our workers must have the industry-relevant skills that are required to meet today's in-demand jobs

Along the same lines, I believe that a safe and reliable infrastructure plan that is jointly shared by state and local government can improve the economic growth prospects of Ohio as much as low taxes and workforce development.

While state governments wait for some direction from Washington on Medicare and other health care related policies, our governor continues to promote a Medicaid system that is reducing its costs and maintaining healthy outcomes. I support this effort, along with the idea that able-bodied single adults can contribute financially to the cost of their Medicaid benefits. Personal investment in healthcare improves health outcomes and prepares a person's transition into the work force.

Over the next few months, I will continue to work with the governor and the General Assembly to improve the partnership between local governments and state government. I have long advocated that low taxes improve economic growth. However, low taxes must be at *all* levels of government.

Finally, it is critical that our schools receive more flexibility to stretch the state and local dollars they receive. I can't promise more money from the educational formula, but I am fighting to relieve our schools from the burdens of one-size-fits-all state mandates. As I review the governor's proposed budget, I am disappointed that it further erodes the

promise made to local officials and school systems by reducing even further the commercial activity tax (CAT) reimbursement. The partnership forged in 2006 to grow the economy by eliminating onerous business taxes at the expense of local revenue was based upon a promise to local governments that they would receive a reimbursement at a certain amount through 2017. It has been impossible for them to budget appropriately given that this promise has been frayed since 2011.

I am looking forward to working toward a budget that builds on previous successes while creating new opportunities for growth and development for all of Ohio.

At the Capitol

The most important work of the legislature is done in committees. I am very excited about the committees to which I have been assigned this term.

I am the only freshman state senator to be assigned to the Finance Committee. This is the committee that will negotiate the governor's budget, and is charged with considering any legislation that asks for a state appropriation. I will also be serving on the finance subcommittee that focuses on higher education.

I am also the vice chair of the Judiciary Committee. This committee considers all matters regarding changes to civil and criminal laws, as well as issues that impact the judicial branch of state government.

Along with those committees, I will also serve on 3 additional committees: Insurance and Financial Institutions; Transportation, Commerce and Labor; and Energy and Natural Resources. This last committee is particularly exciting, as I will be in the forefront on issues related to Lake Erie.

While the workload will be great, these committees allow me to work on creating an Ohio that is economically competitive, has a skilled workforce and uses its natural resources to enhance our beauty and our economic development opportunities.

Finally, I want to extend a thank you to my senior legislative aide, Anthony Aquillo, and my legislative aide, Sarah Totedo. Because of their wonderful assistance, my new office is up and running, and ready to work for the people of State Senate District 24. You can call my office directly at (614) 466-8056.

Legislative Update

The beginning of every new term is greeted by a flurry of legislation introduced by members of the Ohio House and Senate. The start of the 132nd General Assembly is no exception. The most significant is the state biennium budget (see from the desk of Matt Dolan), however, there will be many others dealing with issues of elections, law enforcement, tax changes, technology, education, etc.

In this newsletter update, I have chosen to highlight proposed legislation that that may be of particular importance to the district.

Senate Bill 2 revises laws relating to environmental protection. What I like about the bill is that it seeks to add two governor-appointed members to the Great Lake Protection Fund. These additional members would be from the private sector, helping ensure that the economic benefits of Lake Erie would be factored into decisions of water protection and water quality.

However, I have declined to sponsor the bill at this point because I am cautious about the additional powers that it grants to the director of the Ohio EPA. I will always work to ensure that property rights are not be jeopardized or minimized by an expansion of government powers.

Senate Bill 3 revises the laws governing Ohio's workforce development programs that may be offered by primary and secondary schools. The bill seeks to do this by further exposing our students to the many job opportunities available to them, and in the process, help them set their career goals. Whether a child receives a high school education, a two-year degree or a four-year degree, it is vital that their education and training can be paired up with needed and available jobs in Ohio.

It is still very early in the legislative calendar, and by the time my next newsletter hits your inboxes in late April, there will be much more to talk about in terms of the budget and other pieces of important legislation.

In the 24th District

My first few weeks as senator have already taken me throughout State Senate District 24. I have had the chance to meet and speak with many of the district's mayors, school superintendents, constituents and business leaders.

I have also had the privilege of learning more about organizations that serve not just State Senate District 24, but Northeast Ohio, as well.



If you or your organization is interested in me attending one of your events, please do not hesitate to contact my office directly at (614) 466-8056. My legislative aide, Sarah Totedo, will be sure that I receive your invitation.

I am back home in the district every week, and always enjoy the opportunity to meet and hear from my constituents.

Finally, one of the best things about holding public office is that you get invited to attend the awards and ceremonies that celebrate individual achievements. As such, it was truly an honor to be in Independence to attend the Eagle Scout Honor ceremony for Nicholas Mrozynski.



Profile

The Foundry

If you ask Clevelanders Mike and Gina Trebilcock what prompted them to open a rowing and sailing center in the heart of downtown Cleveland, they would likely tell you that it was a labor of love. Just up the river from the mouth of the Cuyahoga, The Foundry owes its inspiration to Mike and Gina's three kids, all of whom rowed competitively in high school or college. Because of their kids' experiences, the Trebilcocks understood the importance of having a recreational option like rowing, and what it meant to these young adults and their peers.



Built entirely with private funds, The Foundry is a 65,000-square foot facility that offers state-of-the-art indoor rowing equipment. It plays host to hundreds of athletes, as well as rowing and sailing programs geared toward youth and collegiate student-athletes. Since its opening, The Foundry has added programming with local schools like Urban Community School, Magnificat High School, St. Edward High School, and Saint Joseph Academy.

The Foundry is also working with the Cleveland Metroparks to develop a new sailing center on the shores of Lake Erie at Wendy Park.



It is always great to see such forward-looking investment in Lake Erie's recreational opportunities. As law firms, accounting firms and hospitals attempt to recruit employees from across the country, it is critical that young talent, athletes, and even former athletes such as you

and I, see what Northeast Ohio has to offer. It is more than just a great place to work and raise a family, it is a recreation destination, as well.

Measuring Success

As the year progresses, it is important that we are able to measure how we are doing in a straightforward and meaningful manner. Because jobs and a growing economy play such an important role in the health of our communities, my initial focus will be on unemployment, wages and private sector growth.

Below are some measures that I believe are good indicators of how we are doing in these areas.

Metro Cleveland and Ohio Private Employment Hours and Earnings		
	November 2015	November 2016
Metro Cleveland		
Private Employment	921,000	928,000
Private Avg Weekly Hours	35.1	35.0
Private Avg Hourly Earnings	\$23.55	\$24.92
Ohio		
Private Employment	4,714,900	4,753,500
Private Avg Weekly Hours	34.6	34.3
Private Avg Hourly Earnings	\$22.98	\$23.65
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, State and Area Employment, Hours and Earnings. Not seasonally adjusted. Nov. 2016 data is preliminary.		
Note: Metro Cleveland includes Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain and Medina counties.		

Metro Cleveland and Ohio Employment Trends

	November 2015	November 2016
Metro Cleveland		
Labor Force	1,018,008	1,027,789
Employment	973,998	972,570
Ohio		
Labor Force	5,689,726	5,713,285
Employment	5,421,002	5,435,069
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics. Seasonally adjusted. Nov. 2016 data is preliminary.		
Note: Metro Cleveland includes Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain and Medina counties.		

Metro Cleveland and Ohio Unemployment Trends

	November 2015	November 2016
Metro Cleveland		
Unemployment	44,010	55,219
Unemployment Rate	4.3%	5.4%
Ohio		
Unemployment	268,724	278,216
Unemployment Rate	4.7%	4.9%
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics. Seasonally adjusted. Nov. 2016 data is preliminary.		
Note: Metro Cleveland includes Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain and Medina counties.		

Metro Cleveland and Ohio Private Establishments Trends

	2015 Q2	2016 Q2
Establishments		
Metro Cleveland	53,000	53,300
Ohio	275,500	278,700

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Not seasonally adjusted. Establishment data is rounded. Second Quarter 2016 data is preliminary.

Note: Metro Cleveland includes Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain and Medina counties.